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Tellers of eerie tales

'Ghostbusters' speak at Rutgers

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Staff photo by Glenn Scroggy

Professional ghostbusters Ed and Lorraine Warren, who have been researching ghosts and other hard-to-explain phenomena for the past 40 years. Warren, who grew up in a haunted house, is one of only a handful of demonologists in the country. His wife is a psychic.

CAMDEN — Ouija boards — manufactured in Salem, Mass., that colonial hotbead of witchcraft — have led many people into dangerous brushes with other-worldly beings, according to professional ghostbusters Ed and Lorraine Warren.

The Warrens — who have been researching ghosts and other hard-to-explain phenomena for the past 40 years — spoke to a pre-Halloween crowd of over 300 at the Rutgers Student Center Thursday night.

Ed Warren grew up in a haunted house, and is one of only a handful of demonologists in the country. Lorraine, his wife, is a psychic who can divine the presence of supernatural and preternatural beings.

Together they have been touring college campuses for the past 18 years, spreading the Gospel about ghosts, and warning against uninformed dabbling in the spirit world though satanic churches, seances, fortune-telling and ouija boards.

Ed Warren recalled the case of the seemingly-inanimate Raggedy Ann doll. Through a seance, its owners discovered the doll was inhabited by the troubled spirit of a six-year-old girl, Annabelle.

Annabelle had a tendency to give "psychic slashes" to people she didn't like, drawing blood as if she had used a knife, Warren said. And when a visiting priest threw her across the room — declaring that no doll is stronger than God — the doll-devil got even.

"He was right — no doll or demon is stronger than God," Warren said. "But a demon is stronger than a man or a priest."

After leaving the Warren house that day, the priest ran his new car into a tree. The last thing he remembered seeing before the accident was an image of Annabelle.

Warren, director of the New England Society for Psychical Research, also spoke about ectoplasm, which sometimes leaks from the mouths of those possessed by spirits. He showed slides of spontaneous combustion of human beings, and told about one woman who had flames erupt from her solar plexus while on the dance floor.

Warren told of the evils of devil-worship, citing a case of satanic church members who had nailed the heads of six babies to the wall and eaten the raw flesh.

And he told the story of several families whose houses had been possesed by demons after their children had played with ouija boards.

Horrendous pounding, levitating furniture, "psychic coldness," water flowing from walls, china flying from shelves and crashing on the floor, devilish voices — all this happened in one such possessed house.

"These things, of course, seem impossible to those of you who've never experienced them. And I hope you never do. But we have the proof," Warren said.

One listener, after the talk, said he had a Ouija board and was afraid to go home. He asked the Warrens what he should do with it.

Lorraine Warren told him not to burn it, and not to throw it out. She told him to give it a Christian burial — drawing a cross in the dirt on the grave, and sprinkling it with holy water.

Throughout the show, Ed Warren had trouble with his microphone, which kept switching on and off.

And the final slide of the show — that of Jesus Christ — did not appear on the screen.

The work of demons, perhaps?

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